

Political Spying Denied by Army

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By Michael Getler
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Secretary of the Army Stanley R. Resor strongly denied yesterday that his service had spied on three leading Illinois Democrats—Sen. Adlai Stevenson III, Rep. Abner J. Mikva and former Gov. Otto Kerner.

Resor's denial came in response to charges by a former Army intelligence agent that were disclosed Wednesday by Sen. Sam J. Ervin (D-N.C.), chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights.

"A preliminary check has been completed," Resor stated, and "on the basis of information I have received, I can state that neither Sen. Stevenson, Rep. Mikva nor former Gov. Kerner are, or have ever been, the subject of military intelligence activities or investigations related to political activities. Allegations to the contrary are without foundation in fact."

Resor noted that Kerner, now a judge and a former general in the National Guard, does have a background investigation file "in connection with his military duties." But

the last entry, Resor said, was in 1952.

The charges disclosed by Ervin also involved alleged Army snooping on 800 other Illinois civilians during the last two years, and Pentagon spokesman Jerry W. Friedheim indicated yesterday that the investigation into other cases was continuing.

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Sec. Resor Denies Army Snooping On Three Leading Illinois Democrats

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Ervin's disclosures also drew a strong White House response yesterday. Press secretary Ronald L. Zeigler told reporters that the President totally, completely and unequivocally "opposes spying by the military on political figures and will not permit such activity in his administration.

Zeigler also said no such spying was going on in any way at this time."

Later in the day, however, a resolution was introduced by Rep. David R. Obey (D-Wis.) and sponsored by 24 other congressmen, directing the House Government Operations Committee to investigate any alleged military surveillance of congressmen or other public officials.

Ervin's subcommittee has already announced plans for hearings early next year.

While Resor, stressing the Pentagon's grave concern over the rapidly widening charges of military intelligence abuses, sought to cool

off some of the most potent claims leveled at the Army, the war on service policies in this area escalated yesterday to include the Air Force and Navy.

The Associated Press reported obtaining copies of a Defense Department document dated Sept. 9 and signed by Assistant Secretary of Defense Robert S. Moot stating requirements for the Air Force's Office of Special Investigations to gather information on "demonstrations, agitation, propaganda and disruptive activities directed against the role of the United States in Vietnam, Selective Service or the military establishment which affect the security, mission or viability of U.S. Air Force bases and other installations . . ."

The Air Force, asked to comment on the report, had no immediate reply.

A similar document relating to Navy reporting of "civil disturbances and dissident or subversive activities" threat-

ening Navy and Marine bases commands was also said to be signed by the Pentagon official.

A former Army counter-intelligence agent interviewed in New York yesterday by United Press International alleged that Army surveillance of American citizens had become so detailed that there were special desks at the Pentagon dealing with left wing, right wing and racial activities.

Ralph Stein, who said he was an Army special agent from 1965 through 1968 and served for a while on "the left-wing desk" in Washington, told UPI that "many, many people who nobody knows have had their names and pictures put away in Army files just because they attended a meeting."

Stein said he would appear as a witness in a forthcoming American Civil Liberties Union suit brought against the Army because of its domestic data-gathering activities.